



Messiah College
Mosaic

Honors Projects and Presentations: Undergraduate

2006

Focusing on Femicide: Democracy through the Lens of Women's Rights in Guatemala

Jill Seibert

Follow this and additional works at: <https://mosaic.messiah.edu/honors>



Part of the [Political Science Commons](#)

Permanent URL: <https://mosaic.messiah.edu/honors/271>

Sharpening Intellect | Deepening Christian Faith | Inspiring Action

Messiah College is a Christian college of the liberal and applied arts and sciences. Our mission is to educate men and women toward maturity of intellect, character and Christian faith in preparation for lives of service, leadership and reconciliation in church and society.

www.Messiah.edu

One College Avenue | Mechanicsburg PA 17055

Focusing on Femicide:
Democracy through the Lens of Women's Rights in Guatemala
Jill Seibert
Messiah College
Honors Thesis 2006

Introduction – Creating an Atmosphere of Fear

In 1949, the body of a headless woman was discovered along a path in Guatemala's rural Mayan highlands, shrouded by a flock of vultures. Despite the brutality of the crime, little can be said of the investigation that ensued. Although the path was well-traveled, the police sought no witnesses and made no effort to find the woman's head. They concluded, without any consideration of other motives, that her murder must have been perpetrated by a jilted lover (Forster, 1999).

In 1982, soldiers captured a woman returning from the market with her father during one of the most brutal phases of Guatemala's Civil War. Nine soldiers took turns raping her while her father, who had been badly beaten, was forced to watch. When the soldiers finally released the woman, she reported the incident to her husband who answered that the army was powerful, she should not protest, and if she had remained at home she would not have been raped. The crime went unreported and the soldiers were not held accountable for the atrocity (Hanlon & Shankar, 2000).

In 2001, fifteen-year-old María Isabel Veliz Franco was kidnapped in Guatemala City just ten days before Christmas. When her body surfaced shortly thereafter, examiners found that the murderers had raped her and punched her in the face, disfiguring the girl. They tied her hands and feet with barbed wire,

strangled her, stabbed her, and put her body into a bag. Puncture wounds covered her carcass, which was discovered with a rope still around her neck. Years have passed, but despite the identification of two of the culprits, the perpetrators remain free (Amnesty International [Amnesty], 2005). A preliminary report from the prosecutor investigating the death of María Isabel Veliz Franco included details irrelevant to the crime, applicable only in vilifying the victim. It concluded that María frequented nightclubs, wore short skirts, "always dressed provocatively," and did not like to start the day with prayer alongside the other women in the boutique where she worked (Amnesty, 2005), implying that the fifteen-year-old girl was somehow culpable for the atrocious crime these men committed.

In the past 50 years, Guatemala has seen the rise and fall of dictatorships, endured 36 years of civil war, and eventually returned to democratic governing institutions, but Guatemala remains a society plagued by violence and fear. Guatemala's leaders are finding that a legacy of terror is not easily quelled, as citizens' repeated calls for security jeopardize even their personal freedoms. Along with other post-authoritarian societies, Guatemala can be said to display "an obsessive discourse of order and social peace, as if part of [the society] fixedly subscribe[s] to the Kantian maxim 'I prefer injustice to disorder'" (Hite & Cesarini, 2004, p. 216). This preference for order and societal tidiness has also been manifested by recent increases in vigilante justice and "social cleansing" homicides (Replogle, 2005).

Intense fear of disrupting the status quo, shared by the populace and the highest of government officials and encouraged by a continuous onslaught of human rights abuses,

exemplified in the rising phenomenon of femicide¹, mars Guatemala's attempts at democratic consolidation, creating a stunted and hollow democracy. The existence of femicide acts as a litmus test of sorts, an indicator of the illiberal nature of the fledgling democracy. In Guatemala, femicide functions in two ways: to create doubt about the efficacy and durability of democracy and to effectively hinder further democratic consolidation. Femicide is both a lens through which to examine the confluence of factors (political, historical, and cultural) which undermine democratic consolidation in Guatemala and a politically dangerous phenomenon, the existence of which has adulterated democracy in Guatemala, allowing only the most inchoate of democracies to survive. This paper seeks to understand and explore femicide in Guatemala in light of Guatemala's past and present political struggles, while analyzing necessary conditions of democratic consolidation to understand why femicide and substantive (liberal) democracy, in short, cannot coexist in Guatemala.

The Demands of Democracy

Democracy is an evolving concept. In the days of Aristotle, the adjective "democratic" was used pejoratively to signify a bad polity. Today, the desirability of democracy is almost universally agreed upon. As a word, "democracy" evokes pleasant feelings, so much so that, hoping to capitalize on the positive connotations of democracy, Stalin and Mussolini each described their regime as democratic, as did representatives of the Soviet Union and the Third Reich (Ranney & Kendall, 1951). Clearly, when such regimes can be described as democratic without evoking outright laughter from the populace, the meaning of democracy has been compromised. Scholar Giovanni Sartori's concern that "democracy" might become a meaningless term used to "signify antithetical entities and dignify antithetical practices" seems to

¹ Within this paper I will define femicide as the murder of a woman in which the victim's gender played a significant causal role. For an in-depth exploration of femicide, see pages 6-10.

have been actualized (1987, p. 7). It is no longer enough to say that a country is democratic. Scholars describe democracies today as “electoral,” “participatory,” “minimalist,” “liberal,” and “delegative,” among other options. Indeed, as David Collier and Steven Levitsky say, we have entered an age of “democracy with adjectives” (1997, p. 431). No longer can it be assumed that democracy’s significance is the same to any group of individuals. For that reason, we must not fail to define democracy and evaluate Guatemala in light of the stringent standards that such a term ought to signify.

In its most basic, minimalist conceptions, democracy entails majority rule (through representation) and free and fair elections. But is this all that democracy demands? Most scholars’ (and most individuals’) conceptions of democracy imply far more. Free and fair elections alone do not guarantee the protection of human rights, the accountability of the elected government (aside from elections which occur every few years), freedom of expression, or associational autonomy. A minimalist democracy could be brutally repressive in context, though democratic in name. As Larry Diamond compellingly argues, “In many...democracies, competitive elections do not ensure liberty, responsiveness, and a rule of law. To varying but often alarming degrees, human rights are flagrantly abused” (Diamond, 1999, p. 220). Few citizens would enjoy life in a democracy that demanded nothing beyond democracy’s procedural component of free and fair elections.

A more encompassing notion of democracy has been proposed by Robert Dahl, whose concept of “polyarchy” is widely respected for its thoroughness. Dahl’s definition is a springboard from which many other scholars base their critiques. As defined by Dahl, the seven attributes of polyarchy are: 1) elected officials who control government policy decisions; 2) free and fair elections that occur on a frequent basis and involve minimal levels of coercion; 3)

inclusive suffrage which allows “practically all adults” to vote; 4) the right to run for office for nearly all adults, although age limits may be appropriate; 5) freedom of expression without fear of retribution; 6) existing and legally-protected alternative information sources; and 7) associational autonomy that allows citizens to form organizations and independent political parties (1989, p. 221). Dahl himself admits that while all of the seven characteristics he proposes must be satisfied in order for a polyarchy to exist, the presence of all seven does not guarantee a high-quality democracy (1989). These conditions establish a procedural framework that is enough to make democracy possible; they are not necessarily enough to make democracy “more democratic” in practice (Sartori, 1987, p. 156).

Based on the theory of Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, I would add an eighth precondition for a democratic society – government accountability. Schmitter and Karl argue that, in democracies, rulers must be “held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens” (1991, p. 76). Citizens must be able to voice their concerns to or about the government with the assurance that their concerns will be heard and appropriately heeded. Advancing the concept, Saward describes “responsiveness” as vital to the legitimacy of a democratic government (1994, p. 21). In other words, a democratic government must not forget the citizenry that elected it and can replace it. For free expression to be a meaningful right, someone has to be listening. A democratic government cannot close its eyes and ears to the plight of its people.

While Dahl’s preconditions address institutions that must be in place and rules that must be followed in a democracy, the precondition of government accountability treats substantive concerns. It begins to address the essence of a democratic government. An unaccountable government leads to an illiberal democracy, while an accountable government can foster a liberal

democracy that respects human rights and principles of equality. While liberalization previously signified something less than democratization, encompassing “the more modest goal of merely loosening restrictions and expanding individual and group rights within an authoritarian regime” (Shin, 1994, p. 142), the confusion of the term “democracy” has come to necessitate the concurrent usage of the two terms. A liberal democracy, therefore, is a democracy that evidences concern for the rights of individuals and groups. Similarly, Peter H. Smith says that in order to move from an illiberal democracy to a “truly liberal democracy” there must be “insistence on the protection of rights, rather than the acquisition of benefits, and a societal commitment to extend such rights to others” (2005, p. 310). Clearly these substantive concerns make a difference.

But at best, the aforementioned preconditions constitute meaningful theories – at worst, meaningless, esoteric postulates. For the majority of Guatemala’s citizenry, who lack the luxury of theorizing, what really matters is the interaction between the theory and society. For this reason, it makes sense to examine democracy in Guatemala through the lens of a pressing social issue such as femicide, which exemplifies the blatant disregard for human rights in Guatemala.

Understanding Femicide

As a government of all the people, not merely the wealthy, powerful, mainstream, or otherwise privileged, a high-quality, liberal democracy is characterized not only by the rule of a majority but also by a special concern for the rights of minorities or less powerful groups within society. In Guatemala, the two groups traditionally considered vulnerable are the indigenous Mayans and women. While much has been said of abuses suffered by the indigenous population, crimes against women are only beginning to draw the serious and scholarly attention they deserve.

Contributing to the lack of scholarly attention on crimes against women is the lack of reliable statistical evidence. Experts widely agree that domestic violence is seriously underreported in Guatemala, and authorities have only distinguished between male and female murder victims since 2001, complicating efforts to monitor trends or deduce motivating factors. As such, the term “femicide” (or *femicidio/feminicidio* in Spanish) has only recently entered the public dialogue in places like Guatemala and has yet to come into wide circulation in the United States. The concept is nebulous, with different definitions still vying for acceptance. Many dictionaries do not include the term, while those that do define it as “the killing of a female” (Kipfer, 2005).

For most feminist thinkers, however, to simply say that a murder victim was female is not enough to classify the murder as a femicide.² For example, consider a situation in which an armed robber charges into a bank. In the gunfight that ensues, three of the bank’s patrons are killed, and one of them is female. Feminists would not argue that this murder was femicide because, in this case, it seems clear that the victim’s gender had nothing to do with her murder. Considering the same case, we might suppose that all three of the victims were female. Under such circumstances, we could not determine whether the murders should be considered femicides without further investigation. It could be that the women simply had the misfortune of coming between a violent criminal and his ultimate aim, but, for instance, if it could be proven that the robber targeted his victims among the bank’s patrons *because* they were female or because of something that “female” connotated in his mind, we would categorize the murders as femicides.³

² Jacquelyn Campbell and Carol Runyan are one exception. They defined femicide in 1998 as dictionaries define it today: “all killings of women, regardless of motive or perpetrator status” (Campbell & Runyan, 1998, p. 348), explicitly rejecting the importance of motivation.

³ This example may seem strange to some readers who equate femicide with female infanticide. Femicide is not synonymous with female infanticide, though female infanticide is a form of femicide. This paper does not attempt to examine female infanticide, which is often more a question of economics than sheer misogyny or sexism, although a devaluation of females’ intrinsic worth clearly underlies both femicide and female infanticide.

In speaking of femicide, two different categories often emerge: *intimate femicide* or *intimate partner femicide* and *non-intimate partner* (also referred to as *stranger* or *acquaintance*) femicide (Russell & Harmes, 2001). Even within the distinctions of intimate and non-intimate femicide, consensus on one definition proves difficult to reach, leading individual scholars to adopt their own definitions. One definition, proposed by Karen Stout, suggests utilizing the term intimate femicide to describe “the killing of women by male intimate partners” (1991, p. 476). A similar definition proposed by Myrna Dawson and Rosemary Gartner clarifies Stout’s definition by qualifying intimate male partners as “current or former legal spouses, common-law partners, and boyfriends” (1998, p. 383). Others have convincingly argued that *intimate partner femicide* is a more straightforward term for the concept Stout, Dawson, and Gartner describe since the word “partner” demonstrates that, in its traditional conception, *intimate femicide* does not attempt to include femicides committed by parents, family members, or others with whom the victim may have been intimately acquainted (Campbell & Runyan, 1998).⁴ In Guatemala an estimated 33 percent of femicides fall into this category of *intimate femicide* (Bermúdez, 2005).

As evidenced in Guatemala, intimate femicide is not the only form of femicide in existence. The risk of attack from complete strangers also threatens women. Many definitions arise in this study of femicide as a wider concept that incorporates stranger femicide, though most are deficient for the intention of this paper. One accepted view of the phenomenon argues that femicide is the “intentional” murder of females by males (Ellis & DeKeseredy, 1996, cited in

⁴ While intimate partner femicide is certainly not the same phenomenon as non-intimate partner femicide, the paucity of accurate record-keeping in Guatemala makes it impossible to statistically distinguish between the two in every case. This paper will discuss the wider phenomenon of femicide, not attempting to draw distinctions between intimate partner femicide and non-intimate partner femicide. For the sake of clarity, I may refer specifically to one type of femicide or another throughout the course of the paper, but, unless otherwise noted, conclusions should be assumed applicable to either type, since most of the observable effects on democratization apply to either form, and the underlying societal factors that lead to the perpetration of femicide apply equally well to domestic or non-domestic violence.

Russell, 2001a, p. 15). The weakness of this definition lies with the word “intentional.” Following well-known feminist scholar Diana E.H. Russell’s criticism, I would argue that femicide can be unintentional, as in the case of a man who repeatedly batters his wife until on one particular occasion her body succumbs to the excessive force (Russell & Harnes, 2001). The definition also lacks the factor of gender causality. A man may intentionally murder a woman for a reason not pertaining to her gender, such as a business deal that went badly.

In 1992 Russell proposed her own definition of femicide: the “misogynist killing of women by men” (Radford & Russell, 1992, p. xi). She refers to femicides as “hate crimes targeting victims by gender” (Russell & Caputi, 1992, p. 14). The definition proves problematic in that it excludes, for example, a case of intimate partner femicide in which a man murders his girlfriend in a fit of jealous rage (which hardly makes him a misogynist or qualifies the crime as a hate crime).

Years after her initial attempt at defining femicide, Russell helpfully expanded her definition to include not only misogynistic but also “sexist” killing, making the description much more useful from a feminist perspective (Russell, 2001a, p. 14). The change proves most useful in that the definition no longer specifies that the murder of a woman must be motivated by sheer hatred of all women in order to be classified as a femicide. Sexist murders include murders committed by “males motivated by a sense of entitlement to and/or superiority over females, by pleasure or sadistic desires toward them, and/or by an assumption of ownership of women” (Russell, 2001a, p. 14). Similarly, Russell’s colleague Jill Radford proposes that femicide can be considered not only sexist violence but also “sexual violence,” even without the presence of any explicitly sexual act. Radford argues that every act of femicide is sexual because it elucidates

“the man’s desire for power, dominance, and control” above and beyond any desire for physical gratification (Radford & Russell, 1992, p. 3).

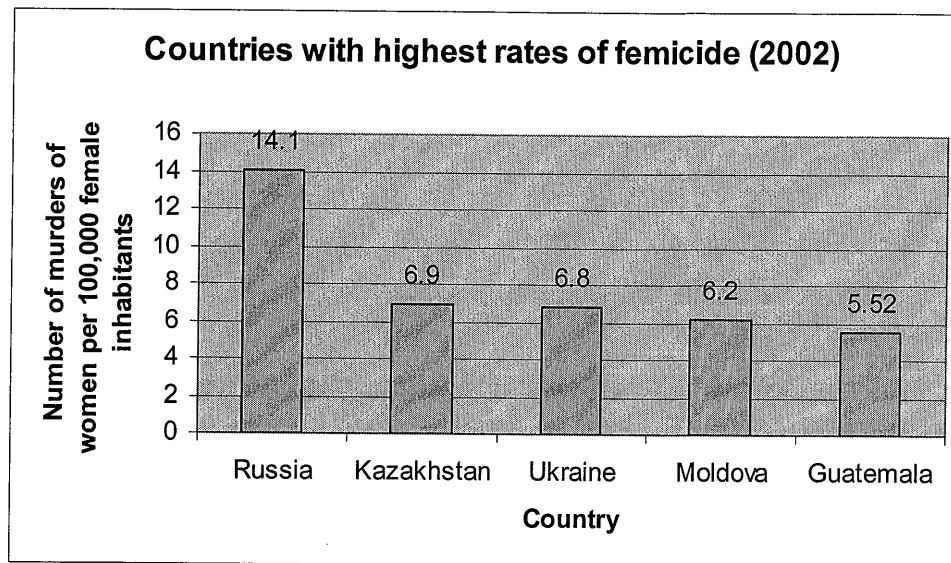
Isis International, a non-governmental women’s organization proposed a valuable definition of femicide in their report “*Ni una Muerte +*” [Not One More Death (author’s translation)], a call to end violence against women.⁵ For the purposes of this paper I draw heavily from Russell’s latter definition as well as the definition proposed by Isis International. As previously elucidated, this paper defines femicide as the murder of a woman in which the victim’s gender played a significant causal role. Such murders, then, would not have come about apart from considerations of the victim’s gender. Unlike Russell’s definition, I do not specify that the perpetrator must be male, because, although the perpetrators of femicide in Guatemala are presumed to be male, this has not been substantiated. In fact, refusing to impose this limitation allows us to more fully explore the pervasiveness of male dominance and sexist attitudes reflected in men and women alike in Guatemala. Violence in a male-dominated society can still be considered patriarchal in nature even when perpetrated by females.⁶

Femicide in Guatemala

Femicidal violence, tragically, is a global phenomenon. In 2002, Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Moldova ranked first through fourth respectively in the world in highest rates of murders of women (measured in number of murders per 100,000 women) (Procurador de los Derechos Humanos de Guatemala [Procurador], 2005). See figure 1.

⁵ “La mayoría de estos hechos se deben a una manifestación extrema de la violencia basada en la inequidad de género, es decir, son femicidios porque se trata de homicidios que no ocurren por casualidad, ni en los que las víctimas podrían ser indistintamente una mujer o un hombre. Se trata de homicidios en los que el hecho de que la víctima sea una mujer es una condición necesaria para que se produzcan” (Isis International, 2001, p. 6). Femicide is “an extreme manifestation of violence based on gender inequity, that is, they are acts of femicide because they are not random murders, in which case the victims could be either a woman or a man, indiscriminately. These are murders in which the fact that the victim is a woman is a necessary condition of the murder’s occurrence” (author’s translation).

⁶ For example, consider the so-called “dowry femicides” in India where a husband or members of his family (often his mother) will kill his new bride because of an insufficient dowry or the inability of the bride’s family to pay the promised dowry.



Note. Data retrieved from Procurador de los Derechos Humanos de Guatemala. (2005). *Muertes violentas de mujeres durante el 2004*. Guatemala City: Procurador de los Derechos Humanos de Guatemala.

Figure 1. Countries with highest rates of femicide (2002).

Closer to home, Ciudad Juárez, just across the U.S.-Mexican border from El Paso, Texas, has raised international awareness of femicide, becoming infamous for the discovery of nearly 400 bodies of women and girls since 1993, most frequently found in the desert on the city's periphery, many of whom were tortured and raped. Due largely to the greater geographic distance separating Guatemala from the United States and its relative unimportance in international relations, Guatemala receives little media attention, but in purely numeric terms the country has a greater problem with femicide than does Mexico, ranking fifth in the world in murders of women per 100,000 women (Procurador, 2005)⁷. Guatemala had almost four times

⁷ Despite Guatemala's already-high ranking, human rights observers and scholars agree that police statistics on femicide in Guatemala are conservative. Those who have lost a relative or friend often fear the repercussions of reporting the murder and doubt the ability of state institutions to resolve the crime and aptly administer justice (Amnesty, 2005).

the number of femicides reported in Costa Rica (measured per 100,000 women), the only other Latin American country for which it was possible to obtain figures (Procurador, 2005).

Among those women murdered in Guatemala, statistics show that 53.3 percent of the victims are between the ages of 11 and 30 (Procurador, 2005). The victims have come from different walks of life: students, housewives, professionals, domestic employees, unskilled workers, members or former members of youth gangs (*maras*), and sex workers (Amnesty, 2005). The common thread binding most of these women together is that they are young and poor.⁸

The femicides seem to be concentrated in the department of Guatemala⁹, where the country's capital, Guatemala City, is located. In 2004, that department alone reported 230 femicides. The department of Escuintla followed, with 54 homicides of women. The departments registering the highest rates of femicide are largely located in southeastern Guatemala in primarily *ladino*¹⁰ departments which boast the highest human development indexes in Guatemala¹¹ (Procurador, 2005). See figure 2.

⁸ Guatemala's National Civil Police reports that 84 percent of the people reporting themselves victims of crime in Guatemala are of low socio-economic status (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights [IACHR], 2004). It is important to keep in mind, however, that 75 percent of the population lives below the poverty line (United States Central Intelligence Agency, 2006).

⁹ The country of Guatemala is broken into 22 departments.

¹⁰ *Ladino* refers to the sectors of the Guatemalan population descended from European ancestry (as opposed to the indigenous population, descended from those Indians who were native to Guatemala before colonization). Reluctance to report crime within indigenous regions of Guatemala may skew these results.

¹¹ Human Development Indexes are comparative measures of literacy, poverty, education, and life expectancy compiled by the United Nations Development Fund. As a country, Guatemala ranked 117 of 177 total ranked countries, and was the second-least developed country in North America. (Wikipedia, 2005). Indigenous regions of the country are disproportionately underdeveloped.

Department	Percentage (Number)	Percentage (Number)
	Women	Men
Baja Verapaz	0.2 (1)	0.77 (31)
El Progreso	0.4 (2)	0.82 (33)
Sololá	0.6 (3)	0.42 (17)
Alta Verapaz	1.41 (7)	1.25 (50)
Jalapa	1.41 (7)	2.49 (100)
Retalhuleu	1.61 (8)	1.30 (52)
Suchitepéquez	1.61 (8)	1.75 (70)
Totonicapán	1.81 (9)	0.52 (21)
Zacapa	2.01 (10)	2.57 (103)
Huehuetenango	2.21 (11)	1.92 (77)
Sacatepéquez	2.21 (11)	1.77 (71)
Santa Rosa	2.21 (11)	3.32 (133)
Chimaltenango	2.41 (12)	1.57 (63)
Quetzaltenango	2.41 (12)	2.22 (89)
Quiché	2.41 (12)	1.07 (43)
San Marcos	2.82 (14)	3.42 (137)
Petén	3.02 (15)	6.11 (245)
Chiquimula	3.22 (16)	4.14 (166)
Izabal	3.42 (17)	6.46 (259)
Jutiapa	5.43 (27)	4.69 (188)
Esquintla	10.87 (54)	10 (401)
Guatemala	46.28 (230)	41.42 (1661)
Total:	100% (497)	100% (4010)

Note. Table modified and reprinted from Procurador de los Derechos Humanos de Guatemala. (2005). *Muertes violentas de mujeres durante el 2004*. Guatemala City: Procurador de los Derechos Humanos de Guatemala.

Figure 2. Deaths (percentage and number) by department.

Most of the killings occurred in urban areas, accompanying a general rise in violent crime including increased *mara* activity, kidnapping for ransom, and drug/weapons trafficking (Amnesty, 2005). The western, indigenous regions of Guatemala registered conspicuously lower rates of femicide, which may or may not be statistically significant. While the lower numbers could indicate fewer incidences of femicide, they might also point to a greater distrust of governing institutions and the police force and a reluctance to rely on these institutions, stemming from the indigenous people's past experiences with law enforcement officials.

Such reluctance is not unfounded. Recent failings of the Guatemalan police force, the National Civil Police (PNC), have done little to instill confidence in the populace. In at least two

cases of femicide, the murdered women were carrying their orders of protection with them when they were killed (IACHR, 2004), demonstrating the inefficiency of policing and protective services for women and contributing to the widely-held belief in Guatemala that trusting the authorities is futile.

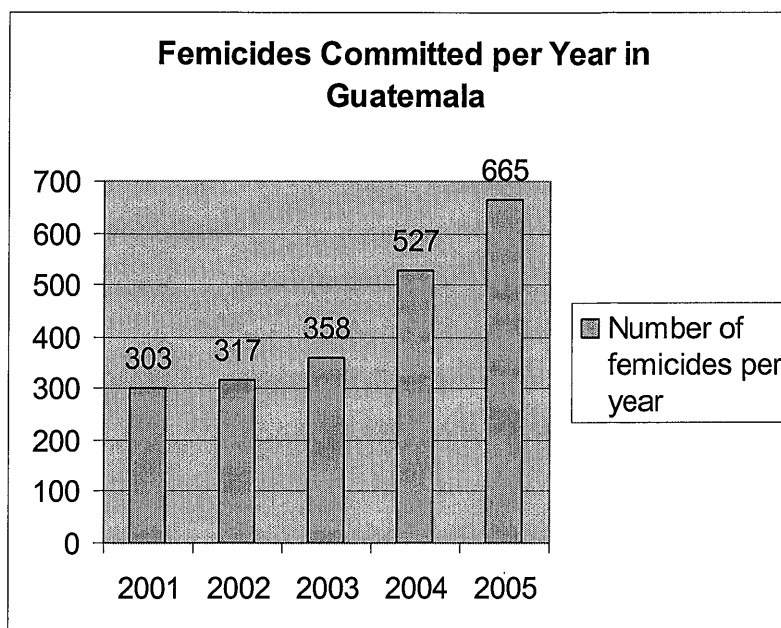
Poor reporting and tracking of crime plagues the PNC. Of the 527 female homicide victims in 2004, they attribute 175 deaths to gunshots, 27 to knife wounds, and 323 to “other causes” (Amnesty, 2005). It is unclear how many of the murders involve sexual violence, since reports in Guatemala might, for instance, list a head injury as the woman’s cause of death and make no further attempt to describe the condition of the body. In addition to these frequent, and likely intentional, exclusions, signs of sexual violence are often missed or ignored in autopsies and police reports (Amnesty, 2005).

Observers trace the reporting errors or insufficiencies to deficient investigations. Guatemalan police wait between 48 and 72 hours before beginning investigations of missing persons (Amnesty, 2005). When investigations do occur, police systematically botch them through only partial completion and unnecessary delays. Police regularly fail to gather forensic evidence, adulterate crime scenes, neglect the need to follow-up on evidence, and ignore arrest warrants (Amnesty, 2005). In instances where a case manages to reach the trial stage, the trial relies almost entirely on testimony, often lacking any physical or scientific evidence (IACHR, 2004). With only testimony to go on, achieving convictions is a difficult task. Of the 3906 cases of family violence against women and children that the Public Ministry opened in 2005, convictions were achieved in only 105 cases (United States Department of State, 2006) Forty-percent of femicides remain uninvestigated and, of those cases that are investigated, suspects are

never identified in many instances (United Nations Commission on Human Rights [UNCHR], 2005).

The Guatemalan government displays little political will to solve the crimes, dismally under-funding and under-equipping the special unit of the PNC for investigating homicides against women, providing only 15 officers (each bearing a caseload of 23 homicides), one car, one cell phone, and one functioning computer, according to an article in the Guatemalan newspaper *La Prensa Libre* [14 September 2004, cited by Amnesty International (Amnesty, 2005)]. Guatemala also lacks a national database of missing persons, the creation of which would prove complicated in a country lacking a national identity register (Amnesty, 2005). In August 2004, 24 of the 152 cases under investigation by the Special Prosecutor for Crimes against Women involved dead women who had yet to be identified (Amnesty, 2005).

Criminal investigations are not the only inquiries hampered by the deficiencies of the PNC; the disorder of pertinent information also creates problems for human rights activists and researchers attempting to track the growth of femicide in Guatemala. The National Civil Police did not differentiate statistically between male and female homicides until 2001, complicating the process of tracing femicide's growth, since researchers have only five years of statistics on which to base assumptions. Significant numeric gains can be seen, however, even in such a short time. In 2001, 303 deaths of women were reported. The number rose slightly to 317 in 2002, grew to 358 in 2003 (UNCHR, 2005), jumped to 527 by the end of 2004 (Amnesty, 2005), and soared to 665 by the end of 2005 (Seijo, 2006). See figure 3.



Note. Figures for 2001-2003 retrieved from United Nations Commission on Human Rights. (2005, February 10). Integration of the human rights of women and the gender perspective: Violence against women: Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Yakin Ertürk: Mission to Guatemala (E/CN.4/2005/72/Add.3). Retrieved July 16, 2005, from <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G05/108/17/PDF/G0510817.pdf?OpenElement>.

Figures for 2004 retrieved from Amnesty International. (2005, June 9). No protection, no justice: Killings of women in Guatemala. *Amnesty International Report*. Retrieved July 10, 2005, from <http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/guatemala/document.do?id=280F8FE94B2826C48025701C0033014>

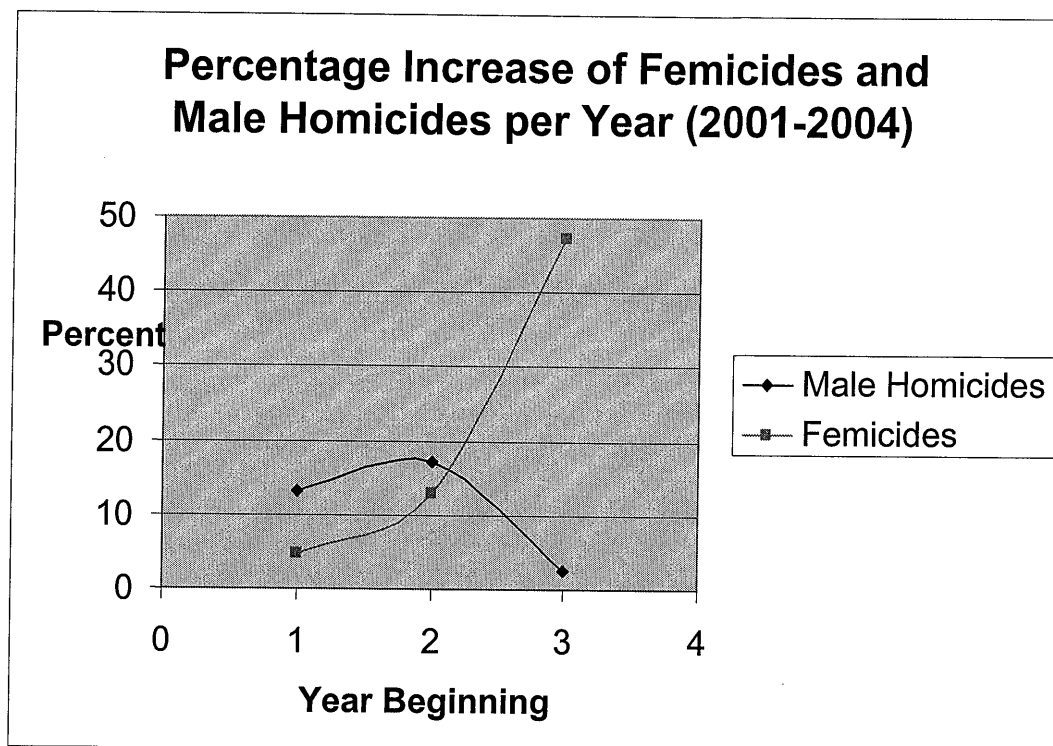
5

Figures for 2005 retrieved from Seijo, L. Harán diagnóstico sobre femicidios. (2006, March 9) *Prensa Libre* [online]. Retrieved April 1, 2006, from <http://www.prensalibre.com/pl/2006/marzo/09/>

Figure 3. Femicides Committed per Year in Guatemala.

Although this growth accompanied a general rise in crime, women comprised just 9.04 percent of deaths due to violent acts in 2003 according to the PNC, while by November 2004 the number had reached 13.45 percent, according to the UN Commission on Human Rights (2005). From

2002-2004 the number of violent deaths of men grew by 36 percent; in this same period the human rights ombudsman reports that violent deaths of women in Guatemala increased by 56.8 percent, demonstrating a consistent upward trend in femicide (Procurador, 2005). See figure 4.



Note. Figures for femicides 2001-2003 retrieved from United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

(2005, February 10). Integration of the human rights of women and the gender perspective: Violence against women: Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Yakin Ertürk: Mission to Guatemala (E/CN.4/2005/72/Add.3). Retrieved July 16, 2005, from <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G05/108/17/PDF/G0510817.pdf?OpenElement>.

Figures for femicide 2004 retrieved from Amnesty International. (2005, June 9). No protection, no justice: Killings of women in Guatemala. *Amnesty International Report*. Retrieved July 10, 2005, from <http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/guatemala/document.do?id=280F8FE94B2826C48025701C00330145>

Figures for homicide 2001-2004 retrieved from Procurador de los Derechos Humanos de Guatemala. (2005). *Muertes violentas de mujeres durante el 2004*. Guatemala City: Procurador de los Derechos Humanos de Guatemala.

Figure 4. Percentage Increase of Femicides and Male Homicides per Year (2001-2004).

To corroborate the numeric argument that femicide is a serious problem in Guatemala, we can also examine the relative viciousness of the crimes committed against women. Women in Guatemala are not merely murdered; they are brutalized. Often, authorities have discovered after recovering a body that the woman was held for hours or even days before being killed. Mutilated bodies have appeared with the slashing of victims' faces, severing of organs, and binding of hands or feet. Women have been beaten, shot, stabbed, sexually assaulted, and cut across the throat (Amnesty, 2005). Occasionally the perpetrator will leave a note beside or on the body (sometimes carved into the skin) with a perverse or misogynist message such as 'Death to the Bitches' (Reyes, 2005). Rarely do we see this type of "excessive violence" (Radford & Russell, 1992, p. 103) or political message with murdered men in Guatemala.¹² The Special Reporter for the Inter-American Human Rights Commission received reports corroborating suspicions that the murders are committed 'to set an example.' In these cases, both the brutality against the women's bodies and the areas in which the corpses were discovered serve to terrorize and intimidate women (IACHR, 2004, point 7).

The Special Reporter also received reports consistent with claims that accompanying the numeric increase in murders of women has been an increase in "the degree of violence and cruelty" of the murders (IACHR, 2004, point 7). Knives or other "cutting objects" are used in 15.49 percent of murders of women compared with 11.2 percent of murders of men. "Objects of force" are utilized 10 percent of the time against women and only in five percent of male homicides. The greatest difference, though, is recorded in strangulation. Seven percent of murdered women are strangled, while only 1.7 percent of male victims experience strangulation (Cereser, 2005). Homicides committed against men involved the use of firearms, a less direct

¹² Although men killed today are not typically brutalized, many have compared the intensity of the violence presently used against women with the brutal political tortures (meant to terrify the population) committed against men and women alike during the 36-year Civil War.

form of physical violence, 83 percent of the time, while the murderers used direct physical violence against women in 32.99 percent of cases (Procurador, 2005). Clearly women in Guatemala disproportionately suffer exaggerated forms of physical violence and brutality.

While the appalling statistics continue to climb, the PNC seems to find more excuses to evade the responsibilities of justice. As of May 2004, the police categorized one-third of the femicides registered in Guatemala as “due to personal problems.” An additional one-fifth were due to “passionate problems” (applied prejudicially in cases where either the murdered woman has been married more than once or the suspects in the crime or those arrested are former partners of the woman who have not entered into a subsequent relationship). Once a case falls under the “personal” or “passionate” problem classification, the police no longer consider it a priority (Amnesty, 2005). While some debate still exists (though it seems to be lessening) over whether or not women are systematically targeted as victims in Guatemala, no one can argue the conclusion that femicides in Guatemala “systematically remain unsolved” (UNCHR, 2005). Indeed, a murderer’s odds look pretty good in Guatemala.

Democratic Consolidation and Femicide

Theories do not function in vacuums, and this maxim may be especially true of theories of democratic consolidation. Democratic consolidation is the process whereby a democracy achieves “broad and deep legitimation” within society (Diamond, 1999, p. 65), yet a populace resigned to illiberal democracy hardly seems the goal of democratic consolidation, evidencing the qualitative concerns that must accompany discussion of the concept. Such a process is, therefore, imbued with consideration of the society itself. While a fully consolidated democracy may be intrinsically valued, a not-yet-consolidated democracy will be judged on its merits. In newly established democracies the citizenry “regard democratization as an experiment, not as a

culmination” (Smith, 2005, p. 12), meaning the longevity of the democratic experiment cannot be assumed.

History is a testament to the collapse of formerly democratic regimes. Samuel Huntington has described three waves of this democratization experiment in which democracies flourished (1828-1926, 1943-1962, and post-1974) (1991, p. 16). Each of the first two waves ended in regression and democratic breakdown – a failure of the democratic experiment. Questions remain as to whether the third wave will end similarly. The implication is that a consolidated democracy will not collapse. The notion of democratic consolidation in Guatemala, therefore, includes a projection of current patterns and trends on Guatemala’s future. If the present trends persist, will democracy remain intact?

Scholars, however, debate the utility of democratic consolidation as a concept. Can we ever truly know that a democracy will not regress? Does the concept of democratic consolidation include an adequate examination of the quality of democracy or are scholars just counting consecutive elections? If the latter is often the case, it begs the question, is democratic consolidation meaningful when the world is full of “consolidated” illiberal democracies?

Democratic consolidation dialogue often focuses too little on the nature of the “democracy” that is becoming “better than any other realistic alternative [citizens] can imagine,” but the literature does include a discussion of societal approval of such governing structures (Diamond, 1999, p. 65). Elites and poor alike must agree to work within the framework of democratic institutions and processes to exercise political power (Diamond, 1997, p. xix). Typically scholars consider a democracy consolidated when a majority of a society’s elites, political organizations and parties, and mass public all support democracy. Larry Diamond has suggested that at least two-thirds of the mass public must support democracy, both in principle

and for their country specifically (though he finds 70-75% to be a more persuasive indicator of consolidation), and no more than 15% of the population can actively reject democracy before a democracy can be considered consolidated (Diamond, 1999, p. 67-68). In a 2005 survey in Guatemala, disappointingly, only 63% of the population claimed that they 'would never support a military government under any circumstances' (Corporación Latinobarómetro, 2005, p. 51). More concerning, in 2005 only 32 percent of those surveyed said 'democracy is preferable to any other kind of government' (Corporación Latinobarómetro, 2005, p. 56), a substantial decline from the 50% preferring democracy in 1996 ("Democracy's ten-year rut," 2005). Comparing Guatemala's political situation in 1996 to the political situation today sheds some light on possible explanations for this change.

A Civil War and Beyond

In 1996, Guatemala was emerging from 36 years of a civil war that began in 1960. Hopes were running high that the recently-signed peace accords would bring stability to a country that had been ravaged by war for a generation. A general optimism pervaded the society, which hoped to at last be free of the excessive violence they had endured. Unfortunately, this same legacy of authoritarian rule and violence that Guatemalans seemed so eager to flee had left deep imprints upon society, poisoning attempts at democratic consolidation and creating the societal conditions that have exacerbated violence against women, contributing to increases in extreme forms of violence such as femicide.

In a brief historical overview of Guatemala, one observes the precursors to femicide. Guatemala's history deeply impacts its present, from the weapons flooding the nation to the difficult gender relations stemming from the Iberian Latin tradition and becoming increasingly turbulent following the Civil War. This section examines the interplay between Guatemala's

history and the phenomenon of femicide, focusing particular attention on civilian militarization, which has lowered inhibitions toward violence, and entrenched gender roles, which have fostered resentment of women's increasing societal importance.

Exposure to Violence & Militarization of Society

Entering their formative years during the Civil War, an entire generation of Guatemalans has been inculcated with a blatant disregard for human rights. They grew up watching their fellow citizens arbitrarily deprived of life by guerilla groups or, more likely, by the government. The memories have become a legacy which regularly manifests itself in human rights abuses, including femicide.

Although a broader examination of Guatemala's political history could be beneficial in uncovering the root causes of femicide, for the purposes of this paper, the discussion will begin with the factors presaging the Guatemalan Civil War. Although this was hardly the beginning of the United States' involvement in the region, during World War II Guatemalan dictator Jorge Ubico granted military bases to the United States. The dictatorship was overthrown after US pro-democracy propaganda flooded Guatemala. Guatemala held elections under a new constitution, leading to the democratic regime of Juan José Arévalo (1945-1950).

Following Arévalo, Jacobo Arbenz (1951-1954) was democratically elected president. Both regimes involved free elections, formation and existence of political opposition parties, abolition of forced labor, implementation of minimum wages, organizing and bargaining rights for the lower socioeconomic classes, and institutions providing social welfare (Jonas, 2002). Still, harsh conditions characterized the lives of Guatemalan peasants. Approximately 250,000 peasants were landless while 40 percent of all farms were owned by 23 families. Ninety-nine

percent of farms were small holdings which, combined, accounted for 14 percent of the land (Proyecto Interdiocesano Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica [Proyecto], 1999).

In his agrarian reform of 1952, Arbenz distributed land to over 100,000 peasant families, demonstrating a clear concern for the poor majorities of Guatemalan society and an Aristotelian conception of democracy. Aristotle once argued that a democracy is not merely a government of the majority but, as Needler (1987) puts it:

More specifically, a government of the poorer classes, which can be expected to act in their interest; in a democracy therefore, the normal tendency is toward greater equality of income. Any tendencies in a democratic direction will therefore be resisted by those who stand to lose if income is distributed more equally (p. xii).

In his attempt to remedy the income inequality in his society, Arbenz invoked the wrath and resistance of the United States when he expropriated the holdings of the US-owned United Fruit Company, the largest landowner in Guatemala (and a company using only 15 percent of its land holdings) (Jonas, 2002). The United Fruit Company was an enterprise with government connections (connected directly or indirectly to both the Secretary of State and the director of the CIA). Ironically enough, and in direct contrast with Aristotle, the Eisenhower administration quickly condemned the land reform as anti-democratic and “Communist,” triggering a CIA-led invasion force to overthrow Arbenz. The Guatemalan army refused to defend its government, enabling the invasion to oust Arbenz (Needler, 1987).

After overthrowing Arbenz, the US government selected Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas to take his place (Jonas, 2002). A new constitution disenfranchised illiterates (which effectively disenfranchised almost the entire indigenous population) (Needler, 1987). Armas quickly undid the reforms of the previous two governments, reinstating a situation of extreme social

polarization. It was the government's refusal to tolerate even "moderate reformist political options" that inspired the growth of a revolutionary guerilla movement that combated the government, sparking the bloody, drawn-out Civil War (Jonas, 2002, p. 260)¹³. The National Defense Committee against Communism (Comité Nacional de Defensa contra el Comunismo) drafted a list of all individuals who had participated in "communist" activities and refused these individuals government offices or employment. By the end of 1954, the list contained 72,000 names (Proyecto, 1999).

Leaders changed quickly in Guatemala, with three military governments and one freely elected president between the 1954 overthrow and the 1970 elected military dictator, Colonel Carlos Arana Osorio. By the 1970s and continuing throughout the 1980s, the military directly dominated the state (Jonas, 2002). In 1974, 1978, and again in 1982 elections were openly fraudulent. In the second half of 1981, General Romeo Lucas García began his "scorched earth" campaign. For the remainder of his time in power, as well as the subsequent military dictatorship of General Efraín Ríos Montt, 440 villages were wiped off the face of the map and over one million internal refugees were created with an additional sum of up to 200,000 refugees fleeing to Mexico (Jonas, 2002).

Even so, as terrible as the situation was, "violence was not indiscriminate; rather, it relied on a cost-benefit analysis in function of the army's principal objective, which was to induce the civilian population to collaborate" (Proyecto, 1999, p. 171). Soldiers were commanded not to use violence against civilians considered 'friendly,' "because it ran counter to the army's strategy

¹³ Samuel Huntington has referred to similar phenomena as the "gap hypothesis," in which a fissure develops between the demands of a citizenry and the willingness or ability of the government to meet these demands, leading to "social frustration and dissatisfaction" (1968, p. 54). When political institutions are deficient and unable to moderate the demands of these dissatisfied and politically mobilized individuals, political instability is created.

of creating settlements and working together with the civilian population” (Proyecto, 1999, p. 171).

After 1983, the government created civilian self-defense patrols called Civil Defense Patrols (PACS) to consolidate military control. Although in theory, PAC membership was voluntary, civilians had little choice but to join the guerillas or join the army by enlisting in a PAC; neutrality was not an option. These PACs eventually involved one million peasants, a full quarter of the adult population of Guatemala (Jonas, 2002). The PACs were easily one of the most psychologically devastating aspects of the Civil War. Neighbors were forced to spy on neighbors and report to their superiors on any “subversive” activities. Huge portions of society were militarized and weapons flooded the population. Today, the civilian population possesses an estimated two million firearms (Reyes, 2005). In 2004 alone Guatemala imported an estimated 84 million rounds of ammunition, facilitating crimes of deadly force (Toomey, 2005). Those once employed in PACs also received training in brutal insurgency repression techniques.

The large number of people deformed by [or educated in] violence through the civil patrols and the practice of forced recruitment indicates the danger that militarization will have long-term repercussions. Militarization has influenced value systems and behavioral patterns and enabled perpetrators to acquire expertise and perpetuate power networks (Proyecto, 1999, p. 176).

Observable effects of this excessive militarization manifest themselves in the phenomenon of femicide, where especially brutal forms of violence, reminiscent of the violence during the Civil War, are utilized.

When the war finally ended with the signing of peace accords in 1996, over 200,000 had died, over 40,000 were forcibly disappeared (constituting over 40 percent of the total of forced

disappearances for all of Latin America) (Jonas, 2002), and over one million people were displaced. Those who died, disappeared, or were displaced were not, however, the only ones who suffered. The Civil War was astounding in its length (36 years), its scope, and its ability to blur the lines between civilian and combatant. The military by no means spared women and children the devastation of war. Estimates say that women constituted one-quarter of the 240,000 *desaparecidos* (disappeared) or extrajudicially killed (Amnesty, 2005).

Gender Roles

In some ways, women in this *machista* society or “cult of virility” which emphasized “exaggerated aggressiveness and intransigence in male-to-male interpersonal relationships and arrogance and sexual aggression in male-to-female relationships” (Stevens, 1973, p. 315) were victims of especially heinous acts of violence and exploitation. Before and after the widespread massacres that occurred during the war, soldiers often forced women to dance or strip for them. Soldiers sometimes raped the women, either individually or as a mass – always with the effect of sexualizing violence against women (much as femicide today is sexualized by perpetrators who rape their victims or mutilate or expose their victims’ reproductive organs). Women were raped by soldiers and civil patrollers in one of every six massacres analyzed by REMHI (the Recovery of the Historical Memory project of the Catholic Church) (Proyecto, 1999). Accounts include stories of soldiers masturbating while watching a woman be raped by comrades (Proyecto, 1999) and soldiers telling each other to hurry up and finish raping a woman so that they could all have a turn (Hanlon & Shankar, 2000).

In a society where a woman’s sexual purity and virginity is prized perhaps above all else, the shame and trauma of these rapes cannot be fully grasped. Guatemala’s civil war left women to deal with a wake of sexual abuse, sometimes resulting in pregnancy or sexually transmitted

infections, as well as the psychological trauma of being a rape victim in a culture of *marianismo*, the corollary to *machismo* in which female spirituality, purity, and passivity is most encouraged (Amnesty, 2005). *Marianismo* stems directly from Guatemala's strongly Catholic heritage and involves the exultation of the Virgin Mary and concomitant factors and the equation of Mary-likeness and femininity. While Latin American parents typically socialize their male children in the practice of dominance, female children learn "to not cause a commotion, not challenge authority frontally, and to at least appear to be submissive" (Vanden & Prevost, 2002, p. 112). *Marianismo* seemed to call upon women to quiet their desire for justice as well as their shame.

Circumstances did not allow women to dwell on their pain for long. In the late 1970s and 1980s more than half of the households in Guatemala came to be headed by women, as husbands and fathers were killed or simply absent during the war. Many women began to see that they could function independently of men and outside of their stereotypical roles in a *machista* society (Jonas, 2002). "Coping with the consequences of violence often meant that women were the sole supporters of their families; social emergencies led them to assume a higher profile in their communities and in society" (Proyecto, 1999, p. 81). At last Guatemalan women began to step out of the home, both to work and to demand changes. "The experience of persecution, the loss of husbands, relatives and children and the removal of male breadwinners compelled women to move into the public sphere both in terms of income generation and political protest" (Lievesley, 1999, p. 132). The violence perpetrated against women and their families altered many women's views of themselves and their roles in society (Proyecto, 1999). Democracy returned to a changed environment in Guatemala, finding many more empowered women, no longer willing to eschew political involvement or vote their husbands' consciences. Women were eager to claim the privileges of democracy for themselves.

Democracy's Disappointments for Women

Although the war necessitated women's assumption of more visible roles in society, the democracy that ensued did little to equalize society, allowing *machismo* and *marianismo* to persist. After 36 years of warring, when a peace settlement finally arrived, men had a difficult time contending with new societal positions as they discovered that many women had, by necessity, moved away from *marianismo* and submissiveness. Many men also lost jobs, homes or other property, and sources of income during the war. Men transitioned to their new roles with great difficulty and great repercussions in their relations with women. The ramifications of the psychological duress produced by the war exacerbated family abandonment, unstable relationships and alcoholism "all resurfacing in the form of violence against women in and outside the home" (UNCHR, 2005). The pattern in Guatemala is by no means atypical. The country follows a trend Diana E.H. Russell has observed where "in countries where women's power and status have risen...many men have reacted by escalating their already high levels of violence against women" (2001b, p. 176). In this way, increases in femicide can be seen as an indirect result of the Civil War.

Women's rights activists and those concerned with the consolidation of democracy in Guatemala fear that femicide, in many ways a consequence of the Civil War, will frighten women into relinquishing their hard-earned position in society.

The intimidating effect of [the murders of women] could send a perverse message: that women should relinquish the public arena they have strive for with such personal and social effort, and should shut themselves away again in private, abandoning their indispensable role in the development of their country (IACHR, 2004, point 30).

Should women succumb to this fear in mass and relinquish their places in the public sphere, democratic consolidation would surely be compromised (since slightly more than 50% of the population could offer no more than tacit support or opposition for any government).

Thankfully, many women continue to step outside the home, yet democratic institutions have done little to protect them. In fact, in Guatemala, the projection of gender roles into legislation is clear. Until 2004 a man could legally rape a woman if he subsequently married her. Having sex with a minor is illegal, but only if she can prove that she is “honest” and was not behaving provocatively (Toomey, 2005). Domestic abuse is illegal, yet conservative estimates say that 36 percent of all Guatemalan women living with a male partner are victims of domestic abuse (UNCHR, 2005), and the law does not stipulate prison sentences for those convicted of domestic abuse. Moreover, the law declares that an abuser may be charged with assault only if the victim’s bruises remained visible for at least 10 days (United States Department of State, 2006).

Also concerning is the proliferation of social cleansing murders, which demonstrate a lack of trust in governing institutions and the police force. The majority of femicides occur on weekends, particularly in early morning hours when it is believed that good, “honest” girls would be at home in bed (Procurador, 2005). In many instances, perpetrators may be intending to kill prostitutes, female gang members, or other “socially undesirables.” Instead of dealing with their frustration over prostitution, the burgeoning sex trade, or youth gangs in democratically legitimate methods, many Guatemalans are prepared to take justice into their own hands, in part because of the ineffectiveness of law enforcement.

The return to democracy after the Civil War and the terms of the peace accords necessitated the normalization of civil military relations – specifically the military’s separation

from internal policing – yet the inadequately prepared and staffed police force fostered the creation of a vacuum in which crime flourished. Scholar Samuel Huntington views a rise in crime as a natural outgrowth of a transition to democracy.

By weakening state authority, as it must, democratization also brings into question authority in general and can promote an amoral, *laissez-faire*, or “anything goes” atmosphere... Democratization appears to involve an increase in socially undesirable behavior, including crime and drug use, and possibly to encourage disintegration of the family and other bastions of collective authority (Huntington, 1997, p. 7).

Though she lacks the scholarly vocabulary of Huntington, Vidalia Chali of Guatemala clearly agrees with him. ‘The criminals are taking advantage of the peace,’ the 33-year-old told the *Chicago Tribune* in 2003 (Dellios, 2003).

The criminals are not alone in taking advantage of the peace. Thousands of former army security forces simply faded back into society when the war ended in 1996, without any program for their reinsertion into their communities (Reyes, 2005). Guatemalan Congresswoman Alba Maldonado highlights the fact that thousands of former members of the security forces are now Guatemalan police officers, many of whom were trained “in sadistic methods of utterly destroying the enemy” (Reyes, 2005). In addition to the previously discussed negligence of the police force, Maldonado adds that several former combatants who are now police officers have attacked women using counterinsurgency tactics practiced against guerillas and Mayans during the war (Reyes, 2005).

Off-duty police officers comprise a significant constituency of those believed to be involved in social cleansing murders. In fact, the UN Commissioner on Human Rights identifies the Guatemalan police as the “principal source of human rights violations in the country” (2005).

Guatemala's human rights ombudsman says that evidence suggests National Civil Police agents have been implicated in at least 10 incidences of femicide (UNCHR, 2005). This number is more significant when remembering that 40 percent of femicides remain uninvestigated and, of those cases that are investigated, suspects are never identified in many instances (UNCHR, 2005). Guatemalan police officers have also been implicated in sexual violence (Amnesty, 2005). Whether or not the police commit the crimes directly is difficult to substantiate, however, police commonly conceal violence against women, creating alibis and maintaining impunity of the perpetrators (Amnesty, 2005).

Whether or not the crimes are intended to be political in nature, the almost-guaranteed impunity of their perpetrators creates a political issue, as trust in government declines and fear flourishes. "If the police are corrupt, abusive, unaccountable, or even lazy and incompetent, this cannot but affect popular perceptions of the authority and legitimacy of the state" argues Larry Diamond (1999, p. 94). Exacerbating the situation, Amnesty International has noted that "the brutality of the killings and signs of sexual violence on [the women's] mutilated bodies bear many of the hallmarks of the terrible atrocities committed during the [Civil War] that went unpunished" (2005), generating flashbacks to a time when the sort of trust widely acknowledged as necessary for a functional democracy just did not exist.

As crimes continue to go unpunished, human rights advocates and scholars have concluded that the prevalence of impunity in Guatemala may be tied to invisible networks between the men now responsible for maintaining order and justice who previously worked together to instill terror in the population. In many ways, the terror persists because impunity persists.

The inability to obtain justice frequently evokes a sense of powerlessness among victims and survivors. Long-lasting effects observed today include lack of trust in the justice system, the reality that victims live next door to perpetrators in many communities, and the emergence of new forms of social violence, still protected by a mantle of impunity” (Proyecto, 1999, p. xxxiii).

The combination of powerlessness and mistrust creates the functional equivalent of apathy, undermining feelings of personal efficacy. Persistent impunity encourages crime, as criminals rest assured that their crimes will go unpunished.

These new forms of social violence not only demonstrate the prevalence of impunity but also perpetuate the role of the army in society. “The rise in common crime [after the peace accords]...provided a pretext for keeping the army involved in policing and other internal security matters, in violation of the demilitarization accord,” (Jonas, 2002, p. 275). Soaring crime rates have justified an increased military presence in violent neighborhoods. Even under democratic regimes in Guatemala the government “is more subject to pressure from the armed forces than any other democracy in the region at this time” (Peeler, 2004, p. 164). Many of the changes experienced in the new “democratic” regime are “close to being just facades, behind which authoritarian structures remain well entrenched...ready to resurface at any sign of crisis” (Agüero, 1998, p. 3). With authoritarian structures lurking just out of sight in Guatemala, democratic durability is called into question.

The Electoral Threat to Democracy

While a military coup is certainly not out of the question, the greater threat to liberal democracy seems to be elections themselves. Guatemalans have been disappointed with their democratically-elected governments’ inability to control violence and crime. Guatemala is one

of only three Latin American countries to rate crime as a greater problem than unemployment (Corporación Latinobarómetro, 2005, p. 76). As femicide flourishes and insecurity mounts, the nation's fragile commitment to democracy may falter and citizens may use democratic means to elect a government with authoritarian tendencies, a path presaged in 1999 and again in 2003.

In January 1996, a puppet candidate for General Efraín Ríos Montt, who opposed the peace process, lost a run-off election for the presidency to "modernizing conservative" Alvaro Arzú by a mere two percent, a close call for those concerned with human rights in Guatemala (Jonas, 2002, p. 273). While Arzú's victory brought relief to these activists, his government failed to improve the daily lives of the voting population, and he was voted out in the late 1999 general elections. Though Guatemalans dealt with their dissatisfaction with Arzú's government in a democratic fashion, the concern is that they will begin to see that "democracy does not seem to have solved many policy problems" (Philip, 2003, p. 1).

Alfonso Portillo, a member of the FRG, the party Ríos Montt founded, won the 1999 presidential election. Susanne Jonas credits Portillo's victory in part to a "punishment vote" against the Arzú government after it failed to take "even the most basic measures to improve people's daily lives" in terms of socioeconomic status and personal security. "In this sense, it was a vote about people's most immediate concerns, not about the long-range structural issues addressed in the peace accords" (2002, p. 275). Following the election, Ríos Montt himself presided over Congress (Jonas, 2002) despite the atrocities that he committed in the 1980s. As a member of the Congress, Ríos Montt had guaranteed immunity from prosecution.

In 2003, General Efraín Ríos Montt was permitted to run for president, despite a constitutional ban prohibiting anyone previously involved in a coup from running for the office, and received over 19 percent of votes despite presiding over the bloodiest era of Guatemala's 36-

year civil war.¹⁴ Ríos Montt is what Spanish-speakers call a *cirujano de hierro* – a strongman, literally translated an “iron surgeon” – an appropriate moniker for a man whose method of instilling security and order involves cutting away freedoms and abandoning commitments to human rights.

Ríos Montt’s election campaign was marred by violence, and he eventually came to head the most violent campaign in Guatemala since the 1980s. Over 20 political leaders and activists were assassinated, many more barely escaped torture, kidnapping, and attempts on their lives. Journalists were also threatened and political offices were broken into and vandalized. At least seven different political parties, with the notable exception of the FRG, Ríos Montt’s party, found themselves victims of this violence (Helweg-Larsen, 2003).

Nevertheless, Ríos Montt garnered support. He ‘extinguished criminality,’ says one Indian woman from Solala, Guatemala, quoted in *The Economist*. (“Return of a smiling dictator,” 2003). Countless others echo this sentiment. ‘People are dying, and we want rule of law. Only the General can do that.’ Juan Hernandez confidently proclaimed (Associated Press, 2003). ‘When Ríos Montt governed, it was safe here. He is the only one who can be a strong ruler and bring order to this country’ said Ivan Rodriguez who, at the age of 53, should remember well how Ríos Montt governed (Weiner, 2003).

In Guatemala the deafening clamor for order is accompanied by a subtle, gradual erosion of commitment to democracy. ‘Democracies are not facing a coup d’etat but a slow death,’ says Dante Caputo, a former foreign minister of Argentina and director of a 2004 UNDP study on democracy in Latin America. ‘It’s dangerous when democracy becomes irrelevant because it does not solve day-to-day problems,’ he continues in Peter Smith’s *Democracy in Latin*

¹⁴ During the Civil War, Ríos Montt staged a coup in March 1982 after the election of General Ángel Aníbal Guevara. He headed a military regime from 1982-1983 that initiated a “scorched earth” campaign, responsible for almost half of all registered violations during the Civil War (Hanlon & Shankar, 2000, p. 278).

America: Political Change in Comparative Perspective (2005, p. 335). Smith theorizes that democracy need not be overthrown in the structural sense to be abolished. Instead, citizens could become so disenchanted with democracy's failure to provide security and answers to other pressing social problems that they vote in *caudillos* who convincingly promise to crack down on crime or stabilize the economy.

Prescriptive Recommendations

In Guatemala, femicide and other human rights abuses may both signal and promote the demise of liberal democracy. It seems unlikely that electoral democracy in Guatemala will be challenged by military coups in its present form. Democracy in the country does not threaten established interests and parallel powers that run counter to the established government. The less democracy rocks the boat, the greater its spread and durability but the weaker and more illiberal the democracy (Smith, 2005).

There are, however, practical consequences of a persistent illiberal democracy. As the liberal qualities of democracy continue to fade, this weakening will cause human rights abuses such as femicide to flourish. In Guatemala, a great fear of upsetting the status quo has concomitantly supported a gradual but significant decline in human rights within the country. Although the government of Guatemala seems to favor an approach of sweeping problems under the rug, the ramifications of this decision will eventually undermine regime stability. Larry Diamond argues that "a steep and prolonged deterioration in human rights...renders a country more susceptible to a complete breakdown of the regime" (Diamond, 1999, p. 47). In the past, Guatemala's attempted coups have been preceded by consistent declines in Freedom House ratings of political rights and civil liberties (an observable phenomenon in recent years)

(Diamond, 1999). While this may be true, at this point a coup seems unlikely. Democracy, however, is still threatened.

The greater threat to democracy in Guatemala is simply the erosion of the liberal qualities of democracy. As Agüero says, at this point “threats are not so much against regime stability as they are against the depth, quality, and consistency of its democratic features” (1998, p. 11). The imminent threat is that such an erosion will lead to a democracy that becomes increasingly corrupt, responsive to the threats of underground power networks, and disconnected from the needs of the general populace and their demands for security.

There is no more fundamental interest than the security of the person from arbitrary harm, and when harmful acts – illegal arrest, imprisonment without trial, *desaparecid* (disappearance), torture, rape, murder [femicide]– are committed, condoned, or excused by agents of the state, these become political acts, diminishing the quality of democracy (Diamond, 1999, p. 42-43).

This diminishing of liberal democracy is particularly a reality in Guatemala in light of the Civil War and the ever-increasing crime rate, coupled with impunity and the redolence of crimes committed today to political crimes committed during the war. Guatemala faces the very real threat that at some point the country’s democracy will no longer resemble democracy. It will no longer evoke feelings of freedom, equality, and protection of rights. Instead of protecting citizens from persecution, it will protect criminals from prosecution.

As the government allows impunity to persist in an effort to appease the nation’s hidden powers, it will lose legitimacy with the citizenry, and they will grow ever more tolerant of the *mano dura*, the brand of authoritarianism that promises security and intolerance for common crime. ‘[Ríos Montt] has already showed us that he has a heavy hand against crime.’ Zury Ríos,

daughter of Ríos Montt and federal lawmaker, said at a 2003 rally to those she hoped to convince to vote for her father (Associated Press, 2003). And for many constituents, the nostalgia they felt for the days of law and order and discriminate (not indiscriminate) violence convinced them to vote for a man who has also shown them that he is no respecter of human rights. A democracy headed by such a man would not be a liberal democracy.

Guatemala's only hope for ensuring a progression toward liberal democracy would be to do away with the impunity that persistently undermines justice in the country and creates a climate of terror where crimes are committed at will and punished rarely. Conquering impunity would involve ridding the police force of corruption, beginning by training officers and then creating an external body to hold them accountable for their investigations. If an officer was shown to have a history of incomplete or tainted investigations, the officer would lose his/her position.

Changes would also need to take place in Guatemala's legislation, ridding the law books of the blatant prejudice now exercised against women. However, if a democratically elected government were to initiate these broad-sweeping changes and implement measures to demolish Guatemala's underground power networks involving the military and the police force (as well as the possibility of networks of organized crime), that regime would certainly "rock the boat" and face a legitimate threat of overthrow.

If Guatemala hopes to liberalize democracy and diminish the risk of a coup attempt, international organizations should be invited to play a key role. Thanks to the courageous attempts of Sergio Morales, Human Rights Ombudsman, to urge the Guatemalan government to create an international commission charged with investigating the activities and the role of clandestine groups operating in the country, such a commission was created in 2003. Congress

originally supported the commission, named the Commission for the Investigation of Illegal Bodies and Clandestine Security Apparatuses (Comisión para la Investigación de Cuerpos Ilegales y Aparatos Clandestinos, CICIACS), though many questioned their motivations for doing so after the government had shown such reticence to investigating human rights abuses.

The United Nations was invited to participate in the Commission's creation. In July 2003, a team of UN experts visited Guatemala, and in October 2003 they submitted recommendations to the Guatemalan government. January 7, 2004 the government of Guatemala and the United Nations signed a landmark agreement that gave the United Nations substantial power and independence in their investigations of clandestine groups and their ties to the Guatemalan government (United Nations and the Government of Guatemala, 2004). Not surprisingly, Congress deemed the agreement unconstitutional, much to the dismay of Sergio Morales, who protested "The state of panic in which this country lives violates the Constitution, not CICIACS" (author's translation) (Paredes, 2004). The Constitutional Court struck the final blow in August when they also ruled key aspects of the agreement unconstitutional (Washington Office on Latin America, 2005).

The ruling came as a tremendous disappointment to human rights observers who had lauded the agreement as "a valuable model for other countries in the region that are struggling to combat political violence, corruption and organized crime" (Peacock & Beltrán, 2003). Though the Commission was temporarily thwarted, the idea persists. Eduardo Stein, vice president of Guatemala, recently (April 2006) presented the United Nations with a modified proposal for the Commission. If the United Nations accepts this proposal, the Guatemalan government will resurrect the idea of implementing a Commission for the Investigation of Illegal Bodies and Clandestine Security Apparatuses (Grupo Política y Poderes, 2006). The government must not

let this opportunity escape Guatemala. The national government lacks the ability, willpower, or both to deal with crimes in which the clandestine powers are involved. The involvement of external agencies can only improve accountability and the meager efforts that have already been made in investigating and bringing to justice these hidden networks.

While clarifying an agreement with the United Nations, the government has created a commission specifically focused on the problem of femicide in the nation, La Comisión para el Abordaje del Femicidio [Commission for the Study of Femicide (author's translation)]. The Commission, which has been allocated roughly \$533,000 to study the problem of femicide for one year was announced March 8, 2006 (International Women's Day), and has already been dismissed by activists as "bureaucratic window-dressing" (Lakshmanan, 2006). 'It's a show put on for the benefit of the international community,' said Andrea Barrios of Guatemala's Human Rights Legal Action Center (Lakshmanan, 2006). Even the government's decision to announce the Commission on International Women's Day seems to lend credence to the criticisms; the government exploited the occasion to show the worldwide community their commitment to resolving crimes against women when they have shown their own people no similar resolve.

The government continues to squander valuable opportunities to confront human rights abuses in meaningful ways. While studying the phenomenon of femicide could be useful in establishing trends and creating victim/victimizer profiles, the Commission lacks the mandate to make arrests. Perhaps a more efficacious usage of Guatemala's limited funds would be to expand the number of officers and resources of the unit of the PNC responsible for investigating crimes against women. This action would have to be implemented in conjunction with the previously delineated police reforms, as a greater number of officers would have no beneficial effect if the officers lacked a commitment to solving crime regardless of the perpetrators' status.

One useful role of the Commission for the Study of Femicide could be in distinguishing the primary cause of death from other abuse suffered by the victims of femicide. As the system presently stands, there is no standardized method of reporting femicides throughout the country. Oftentimes only a cause of death will be listed in the investigator's report with no reference to other atrocities committed against the victim such as rape, number and location of non-mortal wounds, or markings found on the body. The Commission should make an effort to standardize reporting in regard to femicide nationwide, assisting in tracing trends and determining continuities and discontinuities between the murders.

Despite these positive steps that can be taken by the current government, changes must take place in the government itself. Women in Guatemala have done much in recent years to make their voices heard as critical outsiders, protesting human rights abuses or investigating their sister's/daughter's murders and pressuring the government to end impunity. These actions are courageous and admirable and should not be devalued in any way, but women must also become more involved in government from the inside. Women must have a voice in shaping the laws of their society. Women must not only criticize powerful forces in Guatemala but also become powerful forces for change in their own right.

In 2000 women occupied only 13 percent of seats in upper legislative houses and 15 percent of seats in lower houses in Latin America. In Guatemala, women occupied a paltry nine percent of total legislative seats (Smith, 2005). The country would certainly benefit from heeding the voices of its women. "Women bring something unique to the political arena, which is lost if they remain underrepresented" (Jaquette, 1995). Today women occupy 8.86 percent of seats in Congress, or 14 of 158 seats. Congress is not alone in its low representation of women. Women hold only 2.72 percent of mayoral offices nationwide (United States Department of

State, 2006). Guatemala could particularly benefit from the inclusion of women's voices not only because of the widespread disrespect for women and the scarce attention paid their opinions but also because women are free from many of the entanglements with hidden powers. Women were unlikely perpetrators of human rights abuses during the Civil War and are far less likely to have ties with clandestine networks of power that are propagating impunity and undermining justice in the country.

Women have been a strong voice for justice in civil society, and there is no reason to expect that this pressure would cease were they to reach Congress or other levels of government leadership. The Nordic countries have found that women's strong presence in governing institutions has translated into "more equitable policies and programmes" (Kerr, 2004). It is fair to expect that Guatemala would find the same. To ensure that women's voices have the opportunity to be heard in this patriarchal, discriminatory society, Guatemala should ratify quota laws which require mandatory representation of women. Such laws must be enforceable and involve clear penalties for parties who fail to comply with the mandate to include women on their party tickets. Space must be created for women to enter into the political sector. Historically and culturally women have lacked many of those opportunities that men have been permitted. Whether this results in an inability to raise required campaign funds due to lack of personal ownership or some apprehension in joining the public sector, women must be encouraged to actively participate inside the political sphere, and special needs stemming from societal inequalities must be accommodated.

Conclusion

Simply by virtue of having been raised as a female in Guatemala, women have a unique voice to contribute to the political dialogue. When policies that will affect them are being

discussed, their voices become crucial. Guatemalan women would surely surprise their countrymen by making valuable contributions in fields beyond gender rights or education such as business or defense. Indeed, these voices are vital as Guatemala confronts its violent past and steps into a future that its citizens hope will bring peace and stability.

As a country, Guatemala has faced overwhelming losses. As friends and family members of victims of violence either sanctioned or overlooked by the state, Guatemala's citizens have spent much time in mourning. Democracy in Guatemala, in order to gain the legitimacy which consolidation demands, must confront the unique challenges posed by the country's tumultuous history. No longer can women be treated as nonentities against whom violence is excused. For too long, women's voices have been silenced by fear and repression which act as a stranglehold, suppressing their valuable ideas and contributions. As citizens of a democratic nation-state, the women of Guatemala must be assured a future of promise, free from the shadow rampant femicide has cast on society. For Guatemala's women, this, and nothing less, is what they must demand of democracy.

References

- Agüero, F. (1998). Conflicting assessments of democratization: Exploring the fault lines. In F. Agüero & J. Stark (Eds.), *Fault lines of democracy in post-transition Latin America* (pp. 1-20). Miami: North-South Center Press at the University of Miami.
- Amnesty International. (2005, June 9). No protection, no justice: Killings of women in Guatemala. *Amnesty International Report*. Retrieved July 10, 2005, from <http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/guatemala/document.do?id=280F8FE94B2826C48025701C00330145>
- Associated Press. (2003, November 9). Guatemalans seek help from former dictator. *Charleston Gazette (WV)*. Retrieved March 17, 2006, from Access World News database.
- Bermúdez, M. (2005, November 25). 560 women slain this year, 0 murderers convicted. *Inter Press Service*. Retrieved March 17, 2006, from Access World News database.
- Campbell, J. & Runyan, C.W. (1998). Femicide: Guest editors' introduction. *Homicide Studies*, 2, 347-352
- Cereser, L. Feminicidios, en alza constante desde 2001. (2005, July 12) *Prensa Libre* [online]. Retrieved July 16, 2005, from <http://www.prensalibre.com/pl/2005/julio/12/118621.html>
- Collier, D. & Levitsky S. (April 1997). Democracy with adjectives: Conceptual innovation in comparative research. *World Politics*, 49, 430-451.
- Corporación Latinobarómetro. (2005). *Latinobarómetro report 2005*. Retrieved March 17, 2006, from http://www.latinobarometro.org/uploads/media/2005_02.pdf
- Dahl, R.A. (1989). *Democracy and its critics*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Dawson, M. & Gartner, R. (1998). Differences in the characteristics of intimate femicides: The role of relationship status and relationship state. *Homicide Studies*, 2, 378-400.

Dellios, H. (2003, November 9). *Chicago Tribune*, p. 4. Retrieved March 17, 2006, from Access World News database.

Democracy's ten-year rut. (2005, October 27). *The Economist* [Electronic version]. Retrieved March 17, 2006, from http://www.economist.com/displaystory.cfm?story_id=5093522

Diamond, L.J. (Ed.) (1997) *Consolidating the third wave democracies*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Diamond, L.J. (1999). *Developing democracy: Toward consolidation*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Ellis, D. & DeKeseredy, W. (1996). *The wrong stuff: An introduction to the sociological study of deviance*. Scarborough, Ontario: Allyn & Bacon. Cited in Russell, D.E.H. (2001a).

Defining femicide and related concepts. In D.E.H. Russell & R.A. Harmes (Eds.), *Femicide in global perspective* (pp. 12-28). New York: Teachers College Press.

Forster, C. (1999). Violent and violated women: Justice and gender in rural Guatemala, 1936-1956. *Journal of Women's History*, 11, 55-77.

Grupo Política y Poderes. (2006, April 13). Esperan respuesta de ONU para Ciciacs. *La Prensa Libre*. Retrieved April 27, 2006 from <http://www.prensalibre.com/pl/2006/abril/13/139267.html>

- Hanlon, C.N., & Shankar, F. (2000) Gendered spaces of terror and assault: The testimonio of REMHI and the commission for historical clarification in Guatemala. *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 7, 265-286.
- Helweg-Larsen, S. (2003) Pre-election violence: Murder, intimidation and fraud are part of the Ríos Montt campaign. *Latinamerica Press*, 35, 2-3.
- Hite, K., Cesarini, P. (Eds.), & Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies. (2004). *Authoritarian legacies and democracy in Latin America and Southern Europe*. Notre Dame, IN.: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Huntington, S.P. (1968). *Political order in changing societies*. New Have: Yale University Press.
- Huntington, S.P. (1991). *The third wave: Democratization in the late twentieth century*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Huntington, S.P. (1997). Democracy for the long haul. In L. Diamond (Ed), *Consolidating the third wave democracies* (pp. 3-13). Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. (2004). *The IACHR special rapporteur evaluates the effectiveness of the right of women in Guatemala to live free from violence and discrimination*. Washington, DC: Organization of American States. Retrieved July 10, 2005, from <http://www.cidh.oas.org/Comunicados/English/2004/20.04.htm>
- Isis International. (2001). Ni una muerte +: Voces contra el femicidio. Boletín Red contra la Violencia, 32: Julio-Septiembre, 1-24. Retrieved July 17, 2005, from <http://www.malostratos.org/images/pdf/asesinatos%20mujeres%20caribe.pdf>

Jaquette, J. (1995). Rewriting the scripts: Gender in the comparative study of Latin American politics. In P.H. Smith (Ed.), *Latin America in Comparative Perspective: New Approaches to Methods and Analysis* (pp. 111-133). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Jonas, S. (2002). Guatemala. In H.E. Vanden & G. Prevost, G. (Eds), *Politics of Latin America: The power game*. (pp. 253-284). New York: Oxford UP.

Kerr, J. (2004). From 'opposing' to 'proposing': finding proactive global strategies for feminist futures. In J. Kerr, E. Sprenger, & A. Symington (Eds.), *The future of women's rights: Global visions and strategies* (pp. 14-37). New York: Zed Books Ltd.

Kipfer, B.A. (2005). Webster's New Millennium Dictionary of English, Preview Edition. Long Beach, CA: Lexico Publishing Group. Retrieved September 10, 2005, from <http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=femicide>

Lakshmanan, I.A.R. (2006, March 30). Unsolved killings terrorize women in Guatemala. *The Boston Globe*. Retrieved April 29, 2006, from Access World News database.

Lievesley, G. (1999). *Democracy in Latin America : Mobilization, power, and the search for a new politics*. New York: Manchester University Press.

Needler, M. C. (1987). *The problem of democracy in Latin America*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Paredes, J. (2004, May 5). Ley de la Ciciacs, sepultada. *La Prensa Libre*. Retrieved April 27, 2006 from <http://www.prensalibre.com/pl/2004/mayo/05/87627.html>

- Peacock, S.C., & Beltrán, A. (2003). *Hidden powers in post-conflict Guatemala: Illegal armed groups and the forces behind them*. Washington, DC: Washington Office on Latin America.
- Peeler, J. A. (2004). *Building democracy in Latin America* (2nd ed.). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Philip, G. D. E. (2003). *Democracy in Latin America : Surviving conflict and crisis?*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press in association with Blackwell Pub.
- Procurador de los Derechos Humanos de Guatemala. (2005). *Muertes violentas de mujeres durante el 2004*. Guatemala City: Procurador de los Derechos Humanos de Guatemala.
- Proyecto Interdiocesano Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica. (1999). *Guatemala, never again!*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Radford, J., & Russell, D.E.H. (Eds.). (1992). *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*. New York: Twayne Publishers.
- Ranney, A. & Kendall, W. (1951). Democracy: Confusion and agreement. *The Western Political Quarterly*, 4, 430-439. Retrieved November 9, 2005, from JSTOR database.
- Repogle, J. (2005, October 6). In Guatemala, a rise in vigilante justice. *Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved December 4, 2005, from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/1006/p06s01-woam.html>
- Return of a smiling dictator. (2003, November 8). *The Economist*. Retrieved March 17, 2006, from Access World News database.

- Reyes, A. (2005, June 22). Guatemala: brutal killings of women recall counterinsurgency techniques. *Inter Press Service News Agency*. Retrieved September 28, 2005, from <http://www.ipsnews.org/news.asp?idnews=29187>
- Russell, D.E.H. (2001a). Defining femicide and related concepts. In D.E.H. Russell & R.A. Harmes (Eds.), *Femicide in global perspective* (pp. 12-28). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Russell, D.E.H. (2001b). Femicide: Some men's "final solution" for women. In D.E.H. Russell & R.A. Harmes (Eds.), *Femicide in global perspective* (pp. 176-188). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Russell, D.E.H., & Caputi, J. (1992). Femicide: Sexist terrorism against women. In J. Radford & D.E.H. Russell (Eds.), *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*. New York: Twayne Publishers.
- Russell, D.E.H., & Harmes, R.A. (Eds.). (2001). *Femicide in global perspective*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Sartori, G. (1987). *The theory of democracy revisited – Part one: The contemporary debate*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers, Inc.
- Saward, M. (1994). Democratic theory and indices of democratization. In D. Beetham (Ed.), *Defining and measuring democracy* (pp. 6-24). London: Sage Publications.
- Schmitter, P.C. & Karl, T.L. (1991). What democracy is...and is not. *Journal of Democracy*, 2, 75-88.
- Seijo, L. Harán diagnóstico sobre femicidios. (2006, March 9) *Prensa Libre* [online]. Retrieved April 1, 2006, from <http://www.prensalibre.com/pl/2006/marzo/09/>

Shin, D.C. (1994). On the third wave of democratization: A synthesis and evaluation of recent theory and research. *World politics*, 47, 135-170. Retrieved January 22, 2003, from JSTOR database.

Smith, P.H. (2005). *Democracy in Latin America: Political change in comparative perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Stevens, E.P. (1973). The prospects for a women's liberation movement in Latin America. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 35, 313-321. Retrieved November 18, 2005, from JSTOR database.

Stout, K.D. (1991). Intimate femicide: A national demographic overview. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 6, 476-485.

Toomey, C. (2005, August 28). *The Sunday Times* (London, England). Retrieved March 17, 2006, from Access World News database.

United Nations and the Government of Guatemala. (2004, January 7) Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Guatemala for the establishment of a Commission for the Investigation of Illegal Groups and Clandestine Security Organizations in Guatemala ("CICIACS"). Retrieved April 25, 2006 from <http://www.un.org/News/dh/guatemala/ciciacs-eng.pdf>

United Nations Commission on Human Rights. (2005, February 10). Integration of the human rights of women and the gender perspective: Violence against women: Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Yakin Ertürk: Mission to Guatemala (E/CN.4/2005/72/Add.3). Retrieved July 16, 2005, from [http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G05/108/17/PDF/G0510817.pdf?](http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G05/108/17/PDF/G0510817.pdf?OpenElement)
OpenElement

United States Central Intelligence Agency. (2006, April 20). *The world factbook: Guatemala*. Retrieved April 25, 2006, from <http://cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/gt.html>

United States Department of State. (2006, March 8). *Country reports on human rights practices – 2005: Guatemala*. Retrieved March 10, 2006, from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61729.htm>

Vanden, H.E. & Prevost, G. (Eds). (2002). *Politics of Latin America: The power game*. New York: Oxford UP.

Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA). (2005, October). *WOLA special report: A long road: Progress and challenges in Guatemala's intelligence reform*. Washington, DC. Retrieved April 29, 2006, from http://wola.org/publications/intelligence_brief_english_oct05.pdf

Weiner, T. (2003, November 9). Guatemala vote offers little hope – it's 'between the oligarchy and organized crime.' *Lexington Herald-Leader (KY)*. Retrieved March 17, 2006 from Access World News database.

Wikipedia. (2005). *Human Development Index*. Retrieved November 8, 2005, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_Development_Index